



Bigfoot

A mysterious creature that may live in the forests of north-west Canada. Some theories suggest that the creature might be a bear, and others that it could be a giant ape similar to a gorilla. Similar stories are also told in Indonesia and Australia and many say there must be some truth to them. Others say the creatures can't possibly exist as no one has ever been able to find a body or the remains of a body.

Presentation

You can use *may*, *might*, *could*, *must*, *can't* and *couldn't* to discuss possible and probable explanations of present situations:

*It **may** live in the forests of north-west Canada.*

*The creature **might** be a bear.*

*It **could** be a giant ape.*

*Many say there **must** be some truth to the stories.*

*Others say they **can't** possibly exist.*

may, might and could

You use *may*, *might* and *could* to say that you think something is possible but that you cannot be certain that is true:

*The creature **may** / **might** / **could** be a bear.*

may not and might not

You use *may not* and *might not* to say that you think it is possible that something is not true:

*It **may not** exist.*

can't and couldn't

You use *can't* and *couldn't* to say that you think something is impossible:

*It **can't** be true.*

must

You use *must* to say that you believe very strongly that something is true:

*There **must** be some truth to the story.*

You do not use *mustn't* to say that something is impossible:

Say *It **can't** be true.* (don't say *It ~~mustn't~~ be true.*)

May, *might*, *could* and *must* are modal verbs. See Unit 52 for notes on the rules of form for modal verbs.

1 Choose the correct modal verb. Sometimes both are possible.



The Yeti, or Abominable Snowman

Another mysterious creature, similar to Bigfoot, that may or ¹ *can't / may not* live in the Himalayas. Some theories suggest that the creature ² *could / may* be an ape and others say it ³ *might / must* be an enormous grey wolf. Locals say there ⁴ *must / couldn't* be some truth to the story and point to giant footprints as proof of its existence. Scientists argue that it ⁵ *can't / mustn't* possibly be true as no real evidence has ever been found.

2 Complete the second sentence using the word given in brackets so that it has the same meaning as the first sentence.

- 1 That man looks just like John. It's obviously his brother.
(must) That man John's brother, they look so similar.
- 2 I'm sure that answer's wrong.
(can't) That answer right.
- 3 They live in the same street. Perhaps they know each other.
(might) They live in the same street. They each other.
- 4 He looks too young to drive a car.
(can't) He old enough to drive a car.
- 5 It's possible that the footprints belong to a large bear.
(may) The footprints to a large bear.
- 6 They've got three houses. They're obviously very rich.
(must) They've got three houses. They very rich.

3 Complete the sentences with *might*, *must* or *can't*. Then listen and check.

- 1 Is that Rose over there? No, it be. She's gone to visit her mother.
- 2 You've been working since six o'clock this morning. You be exhausted.
- 3 You're going in the sea? You be serious! It's too cold.
- 4 Sue want us to bring some food to the party. I'll phone and ask her.
- 5 He love his job. He's always at the office.
- 6 He works so hard, he spend much time with his family.
- 7 That's the phone. I'll get it. It be my mother. She sometimes phones around this time.
- 8 Jamie's so happy these days. He's always smiling and singing to himself. He be in love!